DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 043 901 CG 005 882

AUTHOR	Silver, Robert J.
TITLE	Effects of Subject Status and Interviewer Response Program upon Subject Self-Disclosure in Standardized Interviews.
INSTITUTION	American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.; Illinois State Univ., Normal.; Indiana Univ., Bloomington.
PUB DATE	Sep 70
NOTE	14p.; Paper presented at American Psychological Association Convention, Miami Beach, Florida, September 3-8, 1970
AVAILABLE FROM	Robert J. Silver, Illinois State University, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Psychology, Schroeder Hall 420, Normal, Illinois 61761
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.80
DESCRIPTORS	*Counseling Theories, *Interviews, Models, *Psychotherapy, Research, *Therapists, Therapy

ABSTRACT

Two constrasting psychotherapeutic techniques are compared: (1) Jay Haley and John Davis' technique which tests on the assumption that the therapist enjoys and advantage over the client in terms of power, position and status; and (2) Carl Rogers' technique which rejects the notion that the maintenance of a status differential or interviewer positional advantage is protherapeutic. The experiment was a four-way, completely crossed and balanced factorial design, representing each of the following variables: (1) subject status (high or low); (2) interviewer response program (evaluative or reflective); (3) subject sex; and (4) interviewer. Subjects were 24 male and 24 female Indiana University students. Dependent variables included: (1) talk time; (2) self-references; (3) problem admission; and (4) subject comfort. Neither technique received unqualified support. The Haley-Davis competitive-evaluative program produced the greatest amount of self-disclosure, while the Rogerian program was most effective for subject comfort. (TL)

ED 043901

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association,
Miami Beach, September, 1970

EFFECTS OF SUBJECT STATUS AND INTERVIEWER RESPONSE PROGRAM UPON SUBJECT SELF-DISCLOSURE IN STANDARDIZED INTERVIEWS[1]

Robert J. Silver
Illinois State University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Although the title of this paper is "Effects of subject status and interviewer response program upon self-disclosure in standardized interviews," a more appropriate title might be: "Oneupmanship as a psychotherapeutic strategy." Jay Haley (1963) has suggested that the typical psychotherapeutic relationship is such that one of the participants (the therapist) typically enjoys an unquestionable advantage over the other participant (the patient or client) in terms of power, position, and status. Haley has argued that this positional advantage derives both from extra-interactional factors such as the customary role definitions afforded the two participants, and from within-interaction factors related to the types of communication perrogatives which accrue to the therapist alone. Furthermore, Haley has contended that such a therapist positional advantage must, in fact, obtain if the therapist is to be at all successful in effecting change in his patient. John Davis' (1968) experimental studies of interview behavior have supported Haley, and have demonstrated not only that an interviewer typically enjoys a positional advantage, but that interviewees will behave competitively in attempting to overcome this inherent disparity.

CG 005 882

While Haley and Davis have proposed an essentially competitive view of the nature of interview behavior, a rather longstanding series of counter arguements has found espression in the work of Carl Rogers (1942, 1951, 1955, 1961). Interestingly enough, Rogers' rejection of the notion that the maintenance of a status differential or interviewer positional advantage is protherapeutic seems to have derived some support from experimental attempts (Slack, 1960) to cope with some of the most notable failures of traditional therapeutic endeavors. Slack has reported increased effectiveness in changing delinquent behavior apparently by forbearing use of the status enhancing ploys which are typically part of the therapist armamentarium. He seems to have accomplished this by placing his patients in the highly unusual position of being "one-up" to an expert (the therapist) instead of in the usual "one-down" position. The present investigation attempted to provide an empirical resolution for the above outlined conflict regarding the utility of establishing and maintaining interveiwer positional advantages. This, in so far as self-disclosing verbal behavior and experienced personal comfort on the part of interviewees was concerned.

Based upon Haley's description of extra- and intra-interview sources of positional advantage, and upon Davis' suggestion that the pattern of an interviewer's evaluative responses exerts a powerful effect upon the degree of his positional advantage, the current study sought to create an experimental situation in which each of the conflicting theoretical positions was given appropriate representation.

Insert Fig. 1 about here

Figure 1 presents the treatment combinations (for the variables S Status & I Response Program) which were central to the current study and which will be elaborated upon shortly. The combination of high initial S status and reflective interviewer response program was viewed as an experimental representation of the optimum Rogerian interview, and a representation of Haley's veiw was attempted in the low initial S status--evaluative interviewer response program combination. It was hypothesized that the measurement of S self-disclosure would reveal a significant interaction between S status and interviewer program variables, with high S status--reflective interviewer program and low S status--evaluative interviewer program constituting the continuum extremes. It was further hypothesized that S comfort ratings would show the same interaction with high S status--reflective interviewer program representing the high comfort end of the continuum and low S status--evaluative interviewer program representing the lowest degree of S comfort. The predicted relationship between self-disclosure variable cell means is schematized in the lower portion of Figure 1.

Method

The experiment was a 4-way (2 X 2 X 2 X 2), completely crossed and balanced factorial design, with each of the following variables given representation:

1) Subject Status (high or low)
2) Interviewer Response Program (Draw or Win)
3) Subject Sex (male or female)

and 4) Interviewer (#1 or #2).

Subjects. The total N of 48 Ss were 24 male and 24 female students at Indiana University during the 1968 summer session.

POOR ORIGINAL COPY - BEST
AVAILABLE AT TIME FILMED

Subject status. The manipulation of S status was effected via the administration of differing sets of preinterview instructions. The instructions, which were quite similar in intent to those employed by Siegman, Pope, and Blass (1969), involved the induction of contrasting expectations regarding the interviewer's level of competence and S's presumed native expertise. High status Ss received instructions which described them as having the ability to assist in providing the interviewer with training in an area in which he (the interviewer) was said to be deficient. Low status Ss had their interviewers described to them as virtual universal experts. It was assumed that Ss would experience relative alterations in their perceived statuses as a result of this manipulation.

Interviewer response program. Interviews in both reflective and evaluative conditions consisted of 30 1-minute periods of time available for S verbalization. At the end of each 1-minute period, the interviewer responded with a comment of approximately 10-seconds duration. The nature of the interviewer's comment was determined by the program, or standard operating procedure (either Draw or Win) under which he was operating. Under the Draw program, interviewer comments were exclusively reflective and nonevaluative in character. Here, the interviewer was being denied the use of a powerful status enhancing ploy: the act of interpersonal evaluation. Under the contrasting Win program interviewers emitted status altering evaluative comments, both positive and negative in intent, but in a particular pattern calculated to give S the opportunity to alter the "one-down" position in which the interviewer's very act of evaluation placed S. Interviewer evaluative responses under

the Win program were directly keyed to the content of S verbalization such that S could, if he continued to talk about personal "problems" during two consecutive 1-minute periods, bring about a rescindment of a previous negative interviewer response. Through such competitive behavior, these Ss were presumably able to raise their relative positions. This interviewer response program and the assumptions upon which it is based derive in part from Davis' study. In order to clarify the nature of this program Table 1 presents one possible sequence of S verbalization and I response.

Insert Table 1 about here

Let us now attempt a brief summary of the experimental procedure.

Procedure summary. Each S received either a high or a low status inducing set of preinterview instructions. The S then participated in an approximately 30-minute unstructured interview in which he was merely instructed to talk about himself. The S was interviewed by an interviewer who, for that particular interview, was programmed either to respond exclusively nonevaluatively or to emit particular sequences of evaluative and reflective responses. The design, then, yielded four basic treatment combinations as was suggested in Figure 1.

Dependent variables. Three behavioral measurements, which could be seen as occupying points on a continuum of increasing self-disclosure, were taken. They were talk time, self-references, and problem admission. Talk time was a direct chronograph measure of the amount of S's interview verbalization. Self-reference and problem admission measurements were taken via time sample judgements made by two trained observers

according to criteria employed by Marlatt (1968). A fourth variable, S's level of personal comfort, was measured by means of a questionnaire which Ss filled out after completing the interview.

Results and Discussion

Each of the four dependent variables was analyzed via a 4-way (Subject Status X Interviewer Program X Subject Sex X Interviewer) factorial analysis of variance. The predicted Subject Status X Interviewer Program interaction effect obtained for three of the four dependent variables: problem admission ($p < .055$), self-reference ($p < .05$), and subject comfort ($p < .05$). Table 2 presents the mean problem admission scores for the Subject Status X Interviewer

---

Insert Table 2 about here

Program interaction. For both this dependent variable, and for the self-reference variable, individual comparisons between treatment means revealed that the overall significance of the interaction effect was attributable to a significant ($p < .05$) difference between HIGH-WIN and LOW-WIN Ss. Table 3

Insert Table 3 about here

---

presents these analogous mean self-reference scores. For the subject comfort

---

Insert Table 4 about here

---

variable, a contrasting relationship between the cell means obtained (see Table 4). Here, individual comparisons between means revealed the significant overall interaction effect to have resulted from a significant ($p < .05$) difference between HIGH- and LOW-DRAW Ss.

In conclusion, then, although the predicted Subject Status X Interviewer Program interaction did obtain, the seriated group of condition means departed from that which would have provided unqualified support for either of the two conflicting theoretical positions alluded to earlier. In this departure from the ideal, however, the data provide an apparent means for reconciling the two disparate positions. In one sense, both Haley-Davis and Rogers are correct. Full consideration of the data suggests that each of the positions is, in part, accurate. The competitive-evaluative (Win) program was demonstrated to be capable of producing the greatest amount of self-disclosure, but this required that S be high in initial status and not be low (i.e., that he not be "one-down"). For S comfort, the data showed the noncompetitive-nonevaluative (Draw) program to be most effective. Here, however, the effect depended upon S being initially low in status or "one-down." The data, then, would seem to suggest that an answer to the question of whether "oneupmanship" is an effective psychotherapeutic strategy is: "It depends." It depends both upon precisely what the particular criterion behavior happens to be, and upon what one means by being "one-up."

References

Davis, J. D. The interview as arena: A model for interviewee strategies in standardized interviews. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, 1968.

Haley, J. Strategies of psychotherapy. New York: Grune & Stratton, 1963.

Marlatt, G. A. Vicarious and direct reinforcement control of verbal behavior in an interview setting. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, 1968.

Rogers, C. R. Counseling and psychotherapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942.

Rogers, C. R. Client-centered therapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951.

Rogers, C. R. The concept of the fully functioning person. Unpublished manuscript, 1955.

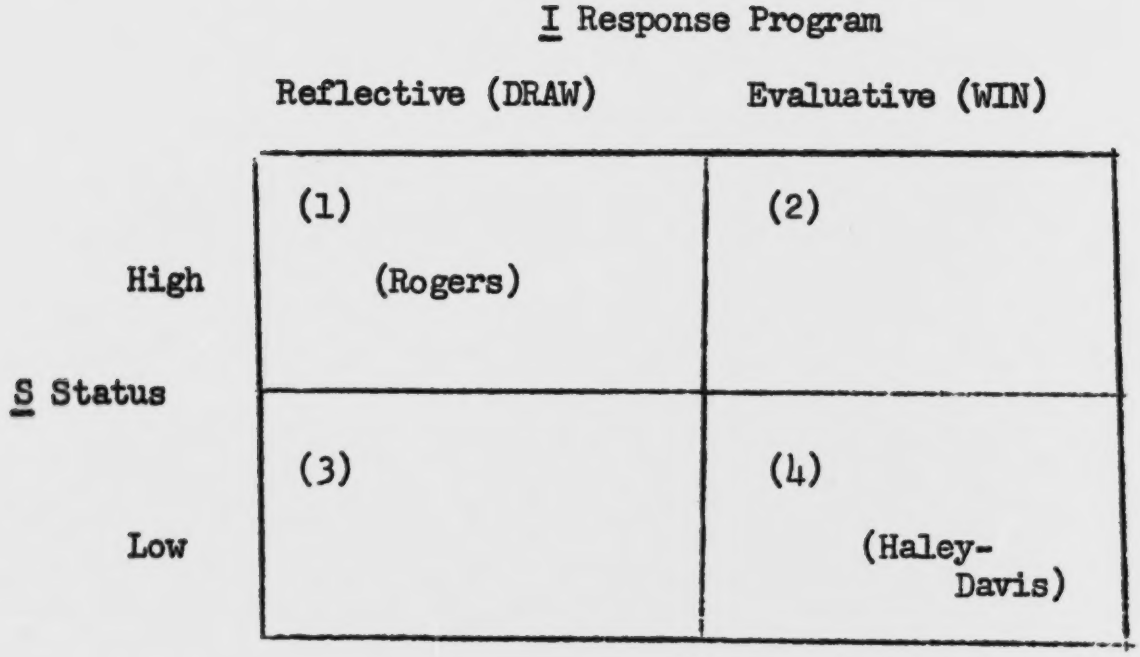
Rogers, C. R. On becoming a person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

Siegman, A. W., Pope, B., & Blass, T. Effects of interviewer status and duration of interviewer messages on interviewee productivity. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D. C., August, 1969.

Slack, C. W. Experimenter-subject psychotherapy. Mental Hygiene, 1960, 44, 238-256.

Footnote

1. The research reported in this study was carried out at Indiana University.



Predicted Relationships
Between Mean Self-Disclosure Scores

Rogers: $1 > 2 \approx 3 > 4$

Haley-Davis: $4 > 2 \approx 3 > 1$

Fig. 1. Schematization of Experimental Treatments and Predictions.

Table 1

Possible Sequence of S Verbalization and I Response

S Content:	$\bar{p}$	$\bar{p}$	p	p	p	$\bar{p}$	p	p
I Response:		O	O	N	P	P	O	N	P

$\bar{p}$ = problem-free 60 second interval
p = S problem emission during 60 second int.
O = reflection of S's main point by I
N = reflection of S's main point + negative evaluation
P = reflection of S's main point + positive evaluation

Table 2

Mean Problem Admission Score as a

Function of Subject Status and Interviewer Program

Subject Status	Interviewer Program	
	DRAW	WIN
High	10.29	16.46
Low	13.08	8.54

Table 3

Mean Subject Self-Reference Score as a

Function of Subject Status and Interviewer Program

Subject Status	Interviewer Program	
	DRAW	WIN
High	93.25	101.50
Low	97.08	91.25

Table 4

Mean Subject Comfort Score as a

Function of Subject Status and Interviewer Program

Subject Status	Interviewer Program	
	DRAW	WIN
High	6.25	15.50
Low	19.50	10.33